

October 19, 2007 as of 3:55pm

**Situation Report #3  
Severe Weather Events of October 18-19, 2007**

## **Overview**

A line of severe thunderstorms, including numerous incidents of tornado activity and strong winds, passed through the Lower Peninsula during the evening of Thursday, October 18, 2007 and overnight into the morning of Friday, October 19. A number of counties have suffered from physical damages, power failures, fallen trees, and utility service interruptions. Three deaths have been reported so far, and some schools are closed today in or near the affected areas.

## **State of Michigan Actions**

The State Emergency Operations Center was partially activated at 8:30am. Reports from Consumers Energy estimated that about 32,000 were without power because of storm effects, but that number had been reduced to about 8,500 by this morning. (Media reports cited DTE as estimating about 5,000 without service in scattered locations, and American Electric Power as estimating 800 without service in Southern Berrien County.) The Michigan Department of Agriculture has reassigned food inspectors from their routine activities to assess food operations in the areas impacted by the severe weather events.

## **Detail of Impacts by County**

### **ALCONA**

Some trees were down, along with a couple of power lines.

### **ALPENA**

Evidence was reported that a tornado had occurred in the area of Black Lake and that it had touched down in three locations.

### **CHARLEVOIX**

It was reported that more than 7,000 were without power, and 2 communication towers were not functioning.

### **CHEBOYGAN**

Media reports of a possible tornado in the area were being investigated

### **HURON**

Severe wind damage to one house and a barn at a farmstead.

### **INGHAM**

Trees and power lines were down in the northeastern part of the county (the City of Williamston and the Townships of Locke, Wheatfield, Williamston). Wind gusts of 55 to 71 miles per hour were reported in the area, along with likely tornado activity (three

tornado warnings had been issued in the Lansing area, with reported sightings southwest of Mason around 8:45pm and near Eaton Rapids around 10pm but no known serious damage). **Media inquiries for Ingham County information can be directed to Sergeant Matt Flint at (517) 676-8235.**

The City of Williamston declared a local state of emergency and suffered numerous damages. Widespread trees were down, hampering access to various areas. Road access into the city was restricted, with roads closed at the intersections of Grand River and Dietz, Grand River at Zimmer, and Linn Road and I-96. Assistance with this was obtained from the Michigan Department of Transportation. The mayor of Williamston reported that power was out across the city, and arranged a press conference at 8:30am this morning. Detroit Edison reported 1600 without power and estimated that it would be restored later today. (Consumers Energy and the Lansing Board of Water and Light each reported fewer than 100 without service, in scattered locations around the area.)

Williamston schools are closed today, and much of the area's damage was observed around its high school. Stands at the soccer fields nearby were reportedly destroyed. A garage and camper were reported as destroyed on Vanneter Road. Meadowdale Drive and its vicinity had homes with walls missing, backyards with debris, phone lines down. The Williamston High School was opened for use as an emergency shelter, with assistance being provided by the American Red Cross. It had been opened at about 11:30pm on October 19, but due to a lack of electric power in Williamston, a second shelter has also been opened at the Webberville High School.

Two fatalities were discovered as the result of a modular home having been propelled into a nearby pond. An injury was also reported involving the driver of a semi-trailer that had overturned on I-96 near exit 117. Regarding the report of a trapped person in a home near a ruptured gas line, Consumers Energy announced that there are now no known leaks as gas had been shut off to 4 area residences to allow service to be restored. Several damaged homes were reported in the Plymouth Landing subdivision, southeast of Williamston. Along the Shiawassee County Line, along Lovejoy Road, a house was damaged and a barn destroyed (on the south side of the road, in Ingham County). Houses were also damaged near the Haslett and Pringle intersection. The possibility of a tornado was being investigated, with area officials and responders surveying the area to assess damages. The Ingham County Emergency Operations Center started activating around midnight, and an incident command center was established in Williamston.

## **KALKASKA**

A person was reported as dead after a tornado had destroyed his mobile home near Crofton (US-131 ten miles north of Kalkaska). At least one airplane and hangar were damaged at the airport at Kalkaska. Numerous trees were down, and the event was confirmed as involving a tornado.

## **KENT**

A large tree had fallen on a home on Red Pine Drive just north of 17 Mile Road.

## **MIDLAND**

One-inch diameter hail was reported.

## **OSCODA**

At 8:10pm, tornado touchdowns were reported at three locations around Mio: County Road 489 three miles north of Luzerne, Kreeand and Richardson Roads, and Centerline and County Road 608. One house, a shed, two RV, and a barn were destroyed; 7 houses had major damage, 4 houses and one RV had minor damage. Tens of thousands of trees were destroyed, with power lines also down in the area. Oscoda opened EOC at 1 p.m. today primarily to assess situation, closed EOC at approx 2:45 p.m. According to Tim London, Oscoda County Emergency Manager: No public damage to report (tens of thousands of trees destroyed on state and federal land); No public debris; Private debris that is being handled privately; No need for state assistance; Emergency Management office to remain open this weekend to answer questions; Not seeking a governor's request; and Weather Service has confirmed that a tornado occurred in Oscoda County.

## **SAGINAW**

Reports of wind damage were being investigated.

## **SHIAWASSEE**

A tornado was observed at 10:52pm on October 18 and primarily involved damage to areas around Perry. Along the north side of Lovejoy Road, which borders Ingham County, a house and garage were damaged, a barn and shed were destroyed, and 7 vehicles were damaged by the storm. A small area is without power there, and due to barn debris on the road, barricading of the road was considered appropriate to discourage **east-west access. A minor injury was also reported. Estimated damages there were \$240,000** and four persons have evacuated the area. Northeast of M-52 and Lovejoy, a storm path was detected for approximately 4 miles, affecting areas to Locke and Braden Roads. On Locke Road, three barns and a shed were destroyed, a house had severe damage, a garage was pushed off its foundation, and 10 vehicles were damaged. On East Braden Road, near Morrice Road, a manufactured home and garage were destroyed, and a motor home was damaged. According to Lt. Mike TerMeer, Emergency Management Coordinator of Shiawassee County: he stated they were "pretty well set" at this point; Reiterated previous damage information (above); Private clean up being handled by private concerns (insurance or by individual); conferred with county board and determined not enough for a local state of emergency; No further action planned "on our part"; and County Drain Commissioner will do a survey and Shiawassee County will update Damage Assessment next week.

## **ST. CLAIR**

Three homes were reported as damaged, and much debris had collected on area roads.

## **TUSCOLA**

Two or three houses were reported as destroyed near Millington. Millington schools are closed, along with Independence Center-Caro schools. A minor injury was reported, involving an infant at a destroyed house. A barn was also destroyed in the area.

Near Deford, a house was destroyed, and a car and RV were damaged.